

2024 South Dakota Legislature

Senate Bill 105**AMENDMENT 105E
FOR THE INTRODUCED BILL**

1 **An Act to provide for the ~~employment reimbursement~~ of costs associated with the**
2 **employment or contract of a veterans' service ~~officers by the Department of~~**
3 **Veterans Affairs officer.**

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA:

5 **Section 1. That § 33A-1-8 be AMENDED:**

6 **33A-1-8.** The Department of Veterans Affairs may promulgate rules, pursuant to
7 chapter 1-26, to:

- 8 (1) Provide procedures and standards for department personnel to act as agents for
9 veterans pursuant to § 33A-1-13;
- 10 (2) Provide procedures and standards for cooperation and administration of burial of
11 veterans pursuant to § 33A-1-15;
- 12 (3) Provide procedures and requirements to assist in securing veterans' benefits and
13 to train county and tribal veterans service officers to provide such assistance
14 pursuant to § 33A-1-16; ~~and~~
- 15 (4) Provide procedures for investigations pursuant to § 33A-1-20; and
- 16 (5) Provide the process by which a board of county commissioners or Indian tribe may
17 request reimbursement for the expenses incurred pursuant to §§ 33A-1-26 and
18 33A-1-28.

19 **Section 2. That § 33A-1-22 be AMENDED:**

20 **33A-1-22.** The board of county commissioners of each county in this state shall
21 employ ~~or a county veterans' service officer,~~ join with another county or counties in
22 employing a county veterans' service officer ~~who, before such employment takes effect,~~
23 ~~is approved by the state secretary of veterans' affairs, or contract with the~~
24 Department of Veterans Affairs, to provide services as required by § 33A-1-24. The
25 number of veterans' service officers employed or contracted by the board in each county

1 is determined by the population of resident veterans in the county, as provided by the
 2 United States Department of Veterans Affairs, as follows:

3 (1) For a county with more than one thousand five hundred but fewer than four
 4 thousand resident veterans, the board must employ ~~or contract for~~ a minimum of
 5 one full-time dedicated veterans' service officer.

6 (2) For a county with four thousand or more resident veterans, the board must employ
 7 ~~or contract for~~ a minimum of two full-time dedicated county veterans' service
 8 officers and must employ ~~or contract for~~ an additional full-time dedicated veterans'
 9 service officer for every additional four thousand veterans residing in the county.

10 (3) For a county with one thousand five hundred or fewer resident veterans, the board
 11 must employ ~~or contract for~~ a minimum of one part-time dedicated county service
 12 officer but may hire ~~or contract for~~ a full-time dedicated county veterans' service
 13 officer to work in a region of two or more counties established by the department.
 14 The total combined population of resident veterans in the region designated by the
 15 department determines the minimum number of full-time dedicated county
 16 veterans' service officers employed ~~or contracted~~ for that region, in accordance
 17 with subdivision (1) or (2) as applicable.

18 ~~The county veteran's veterans' service officer's first appointment ends on the first~~
 19 ~~Monday in January of the second year subsequent to the year of the appointment. The~~
 20 ~~county veteran's veterans' service officer may be reappointed for terms of four years for~~
 21 ~~each term. The appointment is subject to removal by the board or boards of county~~
 22 ~~commissioners upon the recommendation of the state secretary of veterans' veterans~~
 23 ~~affairs or for cause. The county veterans' service officer shall work in the county or region~~
 24 ~~of counties designated by the department for which where the veterans' service officer~~
 25 ~~was is employed or contracted. Employment as a county veterans' service officer is~~
 26 ~~contingent upon approval by the secretary of veterans' affairs.~~

27 **Section 3. That § 33A-1-23 be AMENDED:**

28 **33A-1-23.** The board or boards of county commissioners shall furnish the county
 29 veterans' service officer with ~~such assistance and~~ clerical help as may be necessary, ~~when,~~
 30 in the opinion of the board or boards of county commissioners and the Department of
 31 Veterans Affairs ~~such action would be in the public interest to perform all the statutory~~
 32 duties and exercise all statutory authority in the public interest.

33 **Section 4. That § 33A-1-24 be AMENDED:**

1 **33A-1-24.** Each county ~~veterans~~ veterans' service officer shall provide, within the
2 county or region of counties ~~employing the officer~~ where the officer is ~~designated to serve~~
3 by the Department of Veterans Affairs employed or contracted, local contact between
4 fieldmen of the Department of Veterans Affairs and persons in the armed service or those
5 discharged from such service, and the dependents ~~of such persons~~ thereof. The county
6 ~~veterans~~ veterans' service officer works under the direction of the Department of Veterans
7 Affairs.

8 **Section 5. That § 33A-1-26 be AMENDED:**

9 **33A-1-26.** The Department of Veterans Affairs shall establish a training program
10 for county ~~veterans~~ veterans' service officers. Every county ~~veterans~~ veterans' service
11 officer employed under the provisions of this chapter shall annually complete the training
12 program established by the department and successfully complete a test administered by
13 the department. The department shall reimburse the county for per diem and travel
14 expenses and any applicable registration or testing fees incurred by each officer attending
15 the annual training program.

16 The secretary of the ~~Department of Veterans Affairs~~ department shall certify
17 training compliance to the board of county commissioners. ~~The secretary shall recommend~~
18 ~~against reappointment of any county veterans service officer not in compliance with the~~
19 ~~provisions of this section.~~

20 **Section 6. That § 33A-1-28 be AMENDED:**

21 **33A-1-28.** A county ~~veterans~~ veterans' service officer may be employed ~~either part time or~~
22 ~~full time.~~ The salary and budget of the an officer is determined by the board or boards of
23 county commissioners employing the officer and is paid for by the Department of Veterans
24 Affairs. The board or boards of county commissioners shall provide the officer ~~must be~~
25 ~~provided~~ appointed by the department with a secure office space, office fixtures,
26 furnishings, and equipment, either in the courthouse or some other central and accessible
27 location, and the department shall reimburse the county for expenses incurred in securing
28 and maintaining an accessible office for the county veterans' service officer.

29 **Section 7. That § 33A-1-29 be AMENDED:**

30 **33A-1-29.** An Indian ~~tribes~~ tribe, as defined in subdivision 2-14-2(14), may
31 appoint a ~~veterans'~~ veterans' service ~~officers~~ officer who shall serve under the same terms and

1 conditions as county veterans' service officers, as provided for in §§ 33A-1-22 to 33A-1-
2 28, inclusive. ~~Such The officers employed by the department for an Indian tribe shall be~~
3 ~~known as~~ are tribal veterans' service officers.

4 **Section 8. That § 33A-1-30 be REPEALED:**

5 ~~Such Indian tribes and veterans' service officers shall receive the same salary~~
6 ~~reimbursement and services from the Department of Veterans Affairs as those available~~
7 ~~to county commissioners and county veteran service officers under the provisions of this~~
8 ~~chapter.~~

9 ~~Such Indian tribes shall be entirely responsible for all financial obligations accrued~~
10 ~~by veterans' service officers, appointed pursuant to the terms of § 33A-1-29, except as~~
11 ~~provided in this section.~~

12 **Section 9. That § 33A-1-31 be REPEALED:**

13 ~~The Department of Veterans Affairs may establish, implement, and maintain a~~
14 ~~program for providing financial assistance to counties in paying the salaries of county~~
15 ~~veterans service officers. No county may be reimbursed in excess of twenty five percent~~
16 ~~of the basic salary schedule outlined in § 33A-1-32 for any fiscal year.~~

17 **Section 10. That § 33A-1-32 be REPEALED:**

18 ~~The basic salary schedule for county veterans' service officers, which may be~~
19 ~~adopted by any board of county commissioners, is:~~

- 20 ~~(1) For counties with population of 50,000 and over, \$20,625 a year;~~
21 ~~(2) For counties with population of 20,000 to 50,000, \$19,250 a year;~~
22 ~~(3) For counties with population of 10,000 to 20,000, \$16,500 a year;~~
23 ~~(4) For counties with population of 5,000 to 10,000, \$12,375 a year; and~~
24 ~~(5) For counties with population up to 5,000, \$8,250 a year.~~

25 **Section 11. That § 33A-1-33 be REPEALED:**

26 ~~A county may only be reimbursed pursuant to § 33A-1-31 if the county veterans'~~
27 ~~service officer employed has undergone training pursuant to §§ 33A-1-16 and 33A-1-26.~~

28 **Section 12. This Act is effective July 1, 2025.**